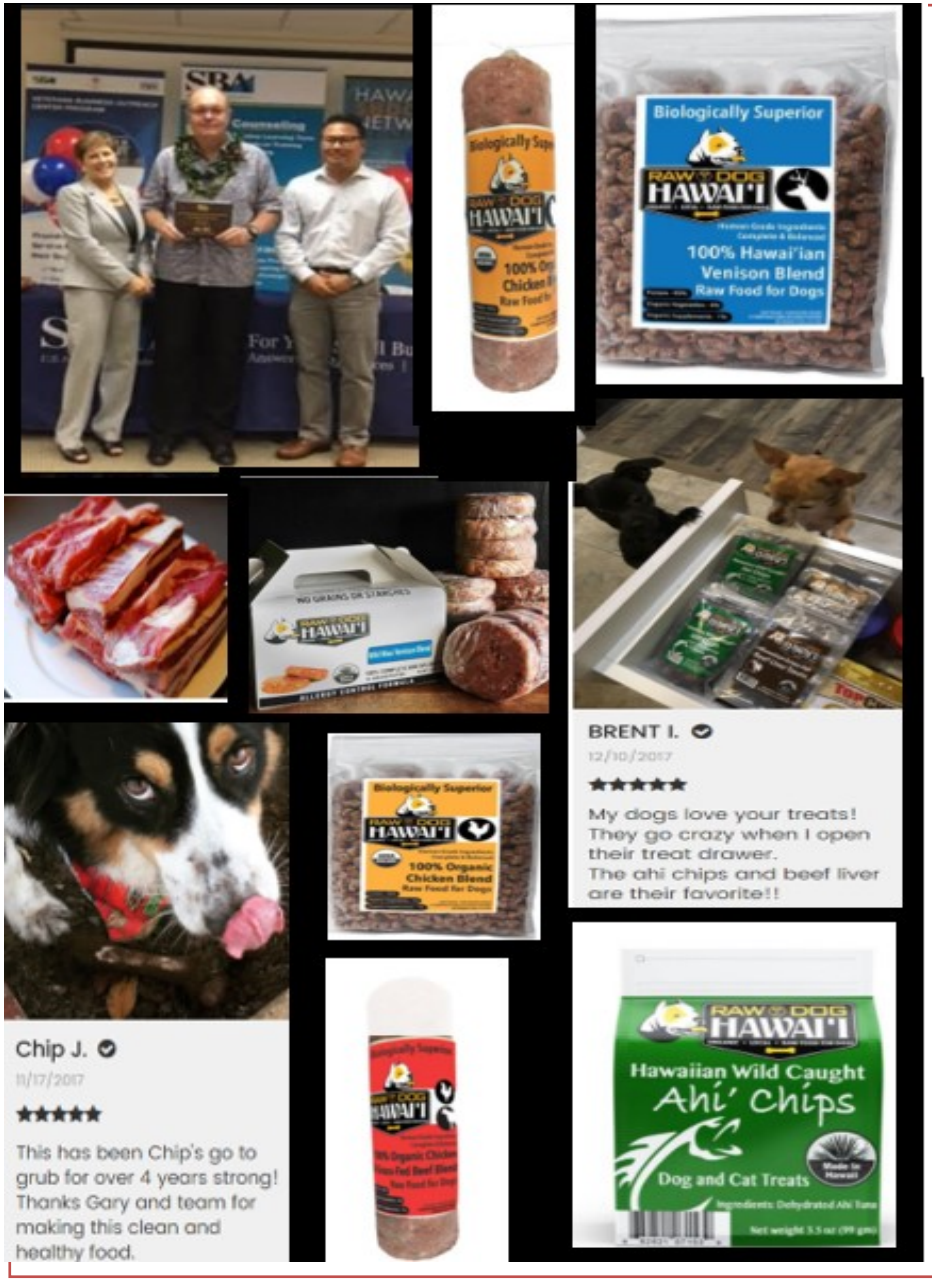
HAWAIʻI SBDC SUCCESS STORY - OʻAHU CENTER



Raw Dog Hawai'I

Gary Novosel and his wife, Leslie, are devoted to helping dogs live allergy free lives, as well as supporting local farmers, ranchers, hunters, and retailers. The couple discovered the benefits of a biologically appropriate raw food diet after their pet dog, Bear, developed allergies and thyroid problems. After relocating to Hawaii, Gary and Leslie realized raw dog food was unavailable on the Islands, so Gary started making it at home. Unintentionally, this event led to the birth of Raw Dog Hawai'i in April 2013. One year later, the company was featured in Island Dog Magazine and "Best of Honolulu" issues of Honolulu Magazine. Raw Dog Hawai'i's product line started with organic pasture raised chicken, grass fed beef, and chicken/beef blend, and has grown to include 7 new dog foods and single ingredient treats. From its humble beginnings at farmer's markets, the products are now available online and in over 16 retail outlets on Oahu, Maui, and Hawai'i Island. Sales have grown by 65% over the past three years.

In November 2017, Gary was nominated by a Hawaii SBDC -Oahu Center advisor and was awarded VBOC's inaugural "Veteran Small Business Person" award for his demonstration of outstanding and savvy business skills to successfully operate and manage the business.

Plans are in place to expand the business and ramp up the production of raw dog food. As he journeys on this exciting yet critical step in his business life cycle, the Hawaii SBDC will remain a supportive and guiding advisory partner.

Gary's passion for dogs and dedication to providing them the best food products for a long and healthy life will continue to be the driving force in his success. He tirelessly and constantly works on and for his business as evident in the numerous client testimonials and success of his business.